



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNITY HEALTH

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**STATE OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 5, 2007
Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, Georgia**

Presiding: Kevin Taylor, President

Present: Charles Owens, Ex-Officio
Steve Barber
Carlos Stapleton
Greg Dent
William Bina, MD

Absent: Jennie Wren Denmark
Maryanne Shepherd
Cindy Turner

SORH Staff: Tony Brown
Sheryl McCoy

Visitors: Sheila Freeman, Spring Creek Health, Blakely, GA
Hunter Hurst, Executive Director, SOURCE, St. Joseph's/Candler Health System

Opening Remarks

The regular scheduled meeting of the State Office of Rural Health (SORH) Advisory Board meeting was held on Wednesday, December 5, 2007, at Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, Georgia. The meeting convened at 10:30 a.m.

Stuart Tedders, Board Secretary, opened the meeting and welcomed the Board and guests to the campus. He gave a brief update about the University and told about the renovation that will move his department, Center for Rural Health & Research, to a new building. He gave an invitation to the Board for a tour of the new building following the meeting.

SORH Advisory Board Minutes:

The minutes of the September 26, 2007 meeting were approved as submitted.

Charles Owens introduced Hunter Hurst, SOURCE Executive Director. SOURCE is a community-based primary care case management program. He shared that members of the Board had previously expressed interest in learning about the SOURCE program and expressed appreciation to Mr. Hurst for his willingness to participate in the SORH meeting and sharing of information.

Hunter Hurst explained SOURCE Program overview as follows:

- SOURCE is a community-based program of “enhanced primary care case management,” developed by St. Joseph’s/Candler to improve the health outcomes of Medicaid recipients with chronic health conditions
- Ten companies serving approximately 13,000 members statewide
- Networks of primary care physicians, healthcare systems and community service providers
- SOURCE has goals to help members reduce need for institutional placement, prevent disability/illness from increasing, eliminate fragmented service delivery through managed care principles and increase cost efficiency of Medicaid long-term care funds
- Eligibility for members are SSI, elderly and disabled, and those at risk of institutionalization
- SOURCE works to blend primary medical care with case management and community support services
- SOURCE also provides wellness promotions through immunizations and screenings
- SOURCE believes the right communication at the right time, between the right people can obtain prevention, early detection and action toward coordination of care for their members

Mr. Hurst reiterated that SOURCE is working to see that people in need of health care services are properly placed for appropriate care. He stated they continue learning and refining the program as issues arise. He expressed much respect for the rural partners recognizing that they have limited resources and additional logistical challenges. He looks forward to future partnerships where they may collaborate to improve health care services to those in need.

Steve Barber stated his facility has discussed looking into areas such as SOURCE because of the lack of nursing home capacity. They have noticed nursing home stays have greatly increased in the past few years.

Charles Owens called attention to the Rural Health Plan CD in their folders. It is the goal of the SORH to distribute the document as widely as possible and hope that it will be a useful tool for the recipients. Mr. Owens gave a brief report on the SORH programs:

- Migrant Program:
 - Drafting the Expanded Medical Capacity for new sites in Houston and Peach counties for submission on December 18, 2007
 - Drafting the Continuation Grant in January 2008
 - Posted the request for IT support to facilitate the hosting of web-based data collection system
 - Ellenton Clinic has a problem with black mold and is investigating avenues for funds for the professional removal of the mold
 - The Enumeration Study draft is near completion
 - The Policy and Procedure Manual final draft is being routed for approval
- PCO Program:
 - Shortage designations are current and consistently being worked in advance of the due dates
 - Some counties are losing their HPSA status or being scored lower as a result of the recruitment of health professionals, which is a positive not a negative
 - Ending September 30, 2007, the J-1 Visa Waiver Program had placed 9 physicians out of the 30 available slots. Numbers are lower from previous years because traditional applicants are applying under the H1-B program which allows them to practice without geographic restriction. As of October 1, SORH has approved the placement of 2.
 - As of June 30, 2007, National Health Service Corps has placed fifteen loan re-payers and 6 scholars.
 - The PCA secured funding for 3 projects; \$750,000 for HIT, \$1.5M for new FQHC sites and \$1.25M to expand mental health services. Those grants have been submitted and awaiting final work plan and timeline from PCA.
 - Primary Care Access Plan being drafted and will be out by end of year.

- FLEX and SHIP
 - Seeking a firm to provide fiscal analysis of Critical Access Hospitals
 - Rural Health Plan being distributed
- Rural Health Safety Net
 - 6 grantee awards – Total \$1.5 million
 - Central Georgia Regional, Forsyth \$321,500
 - Ty Cobb Healthcare, Royston \$302,500
 - West GA Rural Health, Bremen \$250,000
 - Spring Creek, Blakely \$225,000
 - REACH, Greensboro \$201,000
 - Three Ring Health Care, Hinesville \$200,000

Mr. Owens said the Rural Health Safety Net presents an opportunity for communities to create a unique health care network. The awardees are holding regular meetings and working hard to be successful.

Mr. Owens shared that he and Tony attended a Mental Health Workforce Study Commission meeting hosted by Representative Richard Royal in Hinesville recently. They discussed the lack of access for mental health services. One particular focus was on the interaction between mental health professionals and the CMOs as well as the indigent population. The attendance was approximately 45 from various groups, ranging from public health to private providers. Facts were shared about the military families. Mental health services are provided on the military base when the servicemen are home, but once deployed, the families are required to seek services in the private sector.

Mr. Owens explained that the SORH has been working for the past couple of years with the 3RNet Recruitment and Retention website, not only to serve the sites interested in recruiting, but to try to expand the utilization to meet the needs of the physicians desiring work. The State Medical Education Board (SMEB) is going to partner with the SORH to strengthen the physician recruitment efforts.

Mr. Owens said he is hopeful there will be 3 new appointments by the next meeting. He stated that it has been brought to his attention a couple of Board members drew a one year rotation in the lottery. Since that is such a short term, we recommend extending them to 2 years. Carlos Stapleton is the only member affected by this policy and he may express his preference sometime before the next meeting. It is also recommended that we eliminate the one year term and only draw for 2, 3 and maybe 4 year terms. Since there is nothing stated in the bylaws about the length of terms when drawing from the lottery, we will not need to vote on this issue.

DCH has created a new position and named Dr. Carladenise Edwards as Chief of Staff. All the Chiefs in the Department will report to the Chief of Staff. There have also been several staffing changes within DCH and the SORH will disseminate a list of those to all the Board members.

Mr. Owens reminded the Board members to send the Ethics Policy statements to the SORH office and make any changes in the wording they feel necessary. At the last Advisory Board meeting, Steve Barber expressed concerns about the wording in several statements, and Elvina Calland, Deputy Chief Operations Officer, asked the Board to cross out anything not pertinent to Board members. The Ethics Statements will be recompiled with recommendations and routed to the Legal Division for reconsideration. The revised version will be distributed for Board members signatures as soon as it is made available.

Greg Dent stated this is the same Ethics Statement they sign in the grants. He suggested that changes may need to be made for that also.

Kevin Taylor asked if the Alternative Emergency Service Provider Grant had been submitted.

Mr. Owens answered that the application has been submitted, and he anticipates hearing from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) by the end of December. He further explained this is a great partnership for the Rural Health Safety Net grantees, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), Critical Access Hospitals (CAH) and rural hospitals to provide a linkage to contain cost.

Kevin Taylor asked Mr. Owens how many Community Access Point (CAP) applications have submitted.

Mr. Owens stated that he was aware of three applications.

Mr. Owens shared that he and Greg Dent went to Fort Valley State for a meeting to talk about FQHCs. The University is interested in obtaining more information on an FQHC model, not only for their student population, but for the entire community. Mr. Dent is investigating the feasibility for Jones and Houston counties. Mr. Dent is going to be working with the University with that process. This is a new and interesting partnership with great potential.

The next SORH Advisory Board meeting will be held in Cordele, March 5, 2008, at the SORH office.

There being no further business or public comments, the meeting adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Respectfully,

Kevin Taylor, Chairman/Date

Sheryl McCoy, Recording Secretary/Date

Stuart Tedders, Secretary/Date